

## **“GREEN SHEET”**

---

<b>Meeting dates:</b>	June 3, 2011, Commission Meeting
<b>Agenda item #5:</b>	Overview of State Hatchery System; Federal ESA Listings, Salmon Recovery and Status Update on Implementation of Hatchery Reform - (Briefing part 3)
<b>Staff Contact:</b>	Heather Bartlett, Hatcheries Division Manager, Fish Program
<b>Presenter(s):</b>	Heather Bartlett, Hatcheries Division Manager, Fish Program James Dixon, Hatcheries Division, Fish Program

---

### **Background:**

Hatcheries have operated in Washington State for more than a century, beginning with the first hatchery on the Kalama River in 1895. Originally built to compensate for land use decisions that permanently altered large areas of fish-producing habitat, state hatcheries have since become an important part of the state's economy, releasing millions of fish annually for harvest by recreational and commercial fisheries. Tagging studies indicate that more than 75% of the salmon caught in Puget Sound and 90% of the salmon caught in the Columbia River originate from hatcheries, as do about 90% of all steelhead. Contemporary economic reports estimate the contribution of hatchery salmon and steelhead fisheries to the state's economy to be just under \$70 million dollars.

Currently, the WDFW operates 87 hatcheries of which about three-quarters are dedicated to the propagation of salmon and steelhead. The remaining hatcheries propagate trout and other gamefish. Overall salmon and steelhead production by WDFW totals about 190 million juveniles.

As with all activities that can affect wild stocks, state hatcheries have come under intense review since the federal listing of salmon population groupings under the [Endangered Species Act](#) (ESA). While there are many hatchery programs that are acting to stabilize and even increase the abundance of depressed wild stocks, artificial production, in general, has been identified as one of the factors associated with the decline in natural populations of Pacific salmonids.

WDFW worked with federal natural resource agencies and a newly-appointed regional science panel, the [Hatchery Scientific Review Group](#) (HSRG), to identify ways to minimize adverse impacts of hatchery operations on depressed wild stocks, while contributing to sustainable fisheries. The HSRG conducted a comprehensive review of 178 hatchery programs and 351 salmon and steelhead populations in Puget Sound/Coastal Washington and the Columbia River Basin. The resulting population-specific recommendations are intended to provide scientific guidance for managing each hatchery more effectively in the future.

These ongoing efforts, including the Departments' initiative through [21 Century Salmon and Steelhead](#), the Fish and Wildlife Commission's adoption of their [Hatchery and Fishery Reform Policy](#) are all clear roadmaps for hatchery operations into the future in order to fulfill the dual role of harvest and conservation.

Implementation of these above initiatives relative to WDFW hatchery programs will occur through the development of Hatchery Action Implementation Plans (HAIP) and then be documented in Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans submitted for federal ESA coverage.

---

The state's hatchery system represents a public investment of over \$1-billion. Built as compensation for lost natural habitat, state operated hatcheries produce millions of fish for harvest every year, supporting fisheries and local economies from northern Puget Sound to the Columbia River. For an increasing number of depressed wild stocks, hatchery programs offer the best chance of survival. Over the years, WDFW has worked to protect the public's investment in state hatcheries and make the changes necessary to ensure they will continue to provide these benefits in the 21st Century.

Department staff will provide a series of three successive briefings to the Commission that:

1. Outline the historical context of the state's hatchery system and its associated obligations to fulfill state-tribal salmon management agreements or federal requirements for mitigation from habitat loss or damage;
2. Historical and contemporary hatchery production and associated economic value.
3. **The paradigm shift in hatchery operations through implementation of hatchery reform and a status update on meeting the FWC Policy C-3619 Hatchery and Fishery Reform**

---

**Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:**

None.

---

**Public involvement process used and what you learned:**

N/A

---

**Action requested:**

None. Series of three successive briefings only.

---

**Draft motion language:**

N/A

---

**Justification for Commission action:**

N/A

---

**Communications Plan:**

N/A